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LESSONS FROM ANCIENT SCHOOLMASTERS.

COULD old Pythagoras visit once more this busy world, and witness the changes which have transpired since he taught his school of three hundred in Italy; could he enter one of our modern seminaries of learning, and sit but half a day beside the teacher's desk, and glance at the modern means and mode of doing things—the new school books, the ferule, the black-board, the bell, the special regulations for sitting, walking, and standing, the positions first, second, and third, and all the rules and appendages of a modern schoolroom, we doubt not, that on taking his leave of us, he could give us a few hints, especially upon the education of the young, which would not be without their meaning or their value. We fancy we see him now, with his “flowing beard and long white robe,” walking our bustling streets. There is a sort of contemplative dignity about the old philosopher, which the wisest of men now-a-days do not possess. He looks about him for some still retreat for meditation and repose; but every nook is preoccupied by a crowd intent upon business or pleasure. There is an air of bustle and hurry in every one he meets, which seems to say that something new has happened, or that some extraordinary event is about to come. The din and clatter of the workshop and the loom, the rattling of hurrying hoofs and wheels along the stony streets, have drowned the quiet which, through a long life, had reigned in his own great soul, and hushed to silence that music of the spheres, which he once fancied he could hear. His mind, once so calm, is now bewildered and amazed. He quits the busy street, where the dashing speed of every thing he meets, makes him tremble for his life, and gladly seeks the still retreat of some seat of learning, with the hope that there, at least, there

reigns a spirit congenial to his own—that there, at least, he may be reminded of his own school at Crotona, and of the occupation in which he once took so much delight.

He enters. “How brisk—how young—how forward—how thoughtless!” he exclaims. “These are not the sober young men who once listened to my voice, and so eagerly and confidently received every word that fell from my lips.” He witnesses, with a confused mind, the various mechanical operations of the schoolroom in beginning the labors of the day. He listens eagerly to the recitations. He wonders that the smallest stripling knows, with certainty, a thousand things of which he himself had only dreamed. His own idle theories of decads, and invisible spheres, and central fires, are scattered, by the very school-boy, to the winds. He is glad to hear that what he once groped after in the midnight darkness, is now brought forth into the noon-day light. He sees that the discovery of magnetism, of the printing art, of the power of steam, and of the telescope, have revealed, in bold relief, the facts which were once enveloped in a misty shroud. He sighs to think that his own beloved disciples have died without the sight.

But yet he is not ashamed of his own Pythagoreans. Gladly would he be challenged to a comparison. “Your pupils,” he exclaims, “are acquainted, I confess, with a thousand facts which my disciples never knew; but my disciples cherished a thousand noble sentiments which yours have never felt. Your pupils are taught what is in the books; to mine I imparted what was in me. You teach them what to *know*; I taught them what to *feel*.

But to cease from fancy. The ancient teachers greatly excelled the modern in stamping the impress of their own soul upon their pupils’ heart. We teach the books; Pythagoras taught Pythagoras. We impress facts and truths; he enstamped the image of his own mind, and the emotions of his own heart. Ours are Greek and Latin scholars; his disciples were Pythagoreans. To have been a disciple of Socrates or Plato, forms an important part of the history of many a noble Greek; but what historian will dare record the teachers of the great men of America? Who, like the prophet, casts his own mantle upon his disciple’s shoulder? What teacher dreams of making his pupils like himself in all that is intellectual and moral?

Far be it from us to suppose that it is possible for the modern teacher to follow, in all respects, the examples of those ancient philosophers—like Socrates, to lead his disciples to the workshop and the bustling mart; like Plato, to sit with his pupils in the “Academic groves;” or like Aristotle, with his peripatetic school to walk beneath the cooling shade and converse

with nature under the open sky. But to dismiss for the present the reasons why we cannot do this—still we have often dreamed of a school of a more private character, combining the ancient with the modern modes, to which we should love to grant the favor of a fair experiment.

Our novel school should consist of those alone who possess the mind and the means to place themselves unreservedly beneath their teacher's control. Our teacher must be a man of practical, as well as scholastic attainments. During the cold months of the year, the minds of the pupils should be fixed upon the pursuit of those studies which all ages have acknowledged to be indispensable to securing strength and discipline of mind, and upon the acquisition of those rudiments of the sciences, which can be learned from books alone. But the prospect should be constantly presented to the pupil's mind, that these are not the pursuits of the whole year; that when summer clothes the earth with green, and nature puts on her inviting smile, then the dreary walls shall no longer confine them, but that they shall be led forth to meet her as she comes. They should be told, as an incitement to diligence, that he who most faithfully studies her laws during the months which are devoted to books, will be the one who shall best enjoy her charms when their schoolroom becomes the open sky. When spring has arrived, and those sunny days have opened, when, to every pupil, the walls of the schoolroom look prison-like and gloomy, then should commence a new order of things,—then should begin the practical study of the operations of nature, the works of art, and the life of man. The practical knowledge, the inventive powers, and every faculty of awaking curiosity, which the teacher possesses, should now be taxed, and all above, beneath, around, should contribute their quota of interest and knowledge. Natural History, Botany, Geology, and the like, should now be practically and familiarly pursued. The schoolroom should be to-day the mountain, tomorrow the vale—now the deep forest, then the flowery field. The steam engine, the cotton mill, the telegraph, the glass factory, the chemical laboratory, the dye-house, the printing office, the court-room, the public archives, the farm house, the workshop, and every place which exhibits a work of science or of art, should be visited; and there, upon the spot, should be practically applied those principles which, within the schoolroom, they had stored in their minds.

But the taste must not be neglected. The works of genius, in architecture, statuary, and painting, should be visited, and the teacher must awake the interest of his pupils by reciting the history of the authors, explaining the rules of the art,

and pointing out the several beauties and deformities that meet his eye ; thus early planting in the pupil's mind a love of the beautiful, and laying there the foundation of a cultivated and discriminating taste.

And then, too, the moral part. What a glorious field is now open for the teacher who loves his scholar's soul ! What beautiful lessons did our Saviour draw from the lily of the field. How many opportunities would now present themselves of inculcating the principles of morality and religion. In these summer rambles, how many lessons could be taught, of kindness, benevolence, and love. The cripple, the beggar, and the aged poor, should be made to elicit the tear of sympathy from the pupil's eye. The tiresome couch of the sick man, and the gloomy cell of the prisoner, should be visited, to teach them the frailty of the physical and moral nature of man. The cottage of the contented poor, and the mansion of the ambitious rich, should inculcate the truthful lesson that happiness does not always linger where wealth and fortune smile.

The pupil should also be made to know what labor is, and what it means to live by the sweat of the brow. A portion of the time should be allotted to manual exercise in the garden and the field.

In a word, every place where nature or art may be studied, where the moral feelings may be quickened, the intellectual powers invigorated, and the taste refined, should in turn become the theatre of the busy pursuit of these summer days. And who doubts that the teacher whose heart is in the work, and whose inventive mind is well stored with practical, as well as theoretical knowledge, would be capable of finding an abundance of the most useful employment for such a school ?

But when again stern winter draws near, and the leaves of the forest begin to fall, then the old school-room should invite its former tenants back again, with robust bodies and invigorated spirits, to spend another season of sober study and diligent pursuit. Thus should each year be spent ; till at last, at an age far more advanced than that at which our school-boys now forsake their studies, the members of our novel school should enter upon the duties of life.

But waiving, for the present, all doubts respecting the entire practicability of such a system, what would be its advantages over the present mode of instruction ?

First ; no one can doubt that, in all respects, the physical culture of the pupils would be greatly improved by such a course ; and physical culture is surely no trifling subject. It is no light matter to see an intellectual and polished student, after having completed his college course, like a shaded plant, to



wither, droop, and die. Or if the event is not quite so sad, it is far from a cheerful theme, to the pale and sickly scholar, to reflect that he must drag through life a feeble frame, and descend to the grave before a single lock of grey has warned him that it is nature's time to die. If, indeed, in these rambling pursuits the living charms of nature *should* rob from the mind of the earnest boy, a few of the dry "roots of the languages" of the dead, would not the brightening glow of health be doubly worth them all?

In the second place, the graduates of such a school would possess a rich store of practical knowledge—of common sense, which the books can never afford. Who ever learned the beauty and sweetness of a flower by reading of the hues of its petals, or of the odors which it exhales? What eastern traveler ever found an ancient city or temple, which resembled the picture which his school-boy fancy had painted on his youthful mind?

Sic canibus catulos similes, sic matribus hoedos  
Noram; sic parvis componere magna solebam.  
Verum hæc tantum alias inter caput extulit urbes,  
Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi.

Moreover, the graduates of a school like this would acquire a strong love for natural objects—a love so essential to the happiness of human life—a taste which it is always refreshing and healthful to indulge, as it is healing to the eye to rest upon a landscape of green.

Lastly, it would be a happy school. God made us to breathe the pure open air; and the very flowers of the forest spring up for the delight of man. Who, while rambling in the dark forest or flowery field, has not felt an innocent and pure delight which the most splendid pageantry could never give? The scholars would learn to love their teacher and their fellows; and love itself is happiness. It is said of the disciples of an ancient philosopher, that their attachment to their fellows or their school was so strong as even to excite the jealousy of their relatives at home.

But in ancient Greece there was no system of general instruction like our own, in which the poor and the rich meet together on equal terms. The disciples of the philosophers were usually of the higher classes alone—such as were able to sustain themselves, for years, as followers of their great master, and devotees of his philosophy. They were young *men*, old enough to appreciate the value of their instruction, and the worth of their time. But are there not young men now, having

the same means and the same wants as they? And what forbids them to enter upon a system of study like that which we have suggested?

But if, in our public schools, we cannot fully adopt such a mode of instruction as we have sketched above, does it necessarily follow that we can make no approach to it? that the associations of the scholar should all linger amid books, and desks and plastered walls? that the teacher must be contented with the dry details of the illustration of diagrams and answers to printed questions? Shall he never go beyond and away from the book? Shall he be a dead and not a living teacher? Shall he be contented if his boys sit up erect, make not too much noise with their boots, and "answer up" well on examination day? No. To be a true teacher he must be a fresh and living teacher. He must burnish his mind continually. He must make his pupils like himself in all that is intellectually excellent, or morally beautiful. He must be the shepherd of his flock, to lead and not to drive them. He must know where the green pastures spring and the still waters flow. Away with the idle teacher that contents himself with the complacent reflection that he has no pupil who can match him in arithmetic, geography, or grammar. (Alas, how many do!) He must soar aloft; the keen-eyed boy will soon learn to judge how high he flies and how low he falls. The teacher must be not only obeyed, but honored—not only loved, but admired—he must not only teach, but inspire.

It cannot be denied that our system of education is now so well understood in its general features, and our school books are so numerous and complete (pardon me, ye prospective book-makers), that there is great danger of the teacher's resting almost entirely upon the system and the books, and becoming a mere automaton—a mere crank-turner himself. Men who see no immediate results from intellectual efforts, are usually so recreant to their duty to themselves as to make no such efforts; and thus so many a teacher, ere middle age, has lost all the elasticity and sprightliness with which he began his career, and spends the rest of his days in riding some worn-out hobby, or in morose seclusion from the enjoyments of the young, or in bitter opposition to every thing that does not bear the stamp of the century that is gone.

Fellow teachers! our high calling demands high attainments. It is a calling not only to rule and to teach, but to lead and inspire. Let not its cares tarnish the freshness of our minds, or prevent us, for a single day, from adding a new treasure to our intellectual store, and a brighter lustre to the purity of our example.

## WRITTEN ARITHMETIC.

"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun."

In some departments, such is the rapid succession of new fashions, that not the aged alone recognize that which has been before. It is not purposed, however, to decry the fashions, or deprecate the multiplied evils resulting from their fickleness. Amid the diversified interests subserved thereby, it is vain to expect that the excellencies of successive fashions will ever be combined into one that shall be universally acceptable and permanent. Perhaps, too, the fashions are no more changable than the minds of men; for no fashion is so absurd but that, on its appearance, it finds its eager votaries, who are soon followed by others that easily overcome their first reluctance.

Systems of education, methods of teaching particular branches, and school books, are all subject to frequent changes. Different persons disagree, and the same persons think differently at different times, and often readopt their discarded opinions.

Written arithmetic has undergone less change, perhaps, than any other branch taught in schools. Until the appearance of Colburn's First Lessons, the plan of teaching arithmetic was nearly uniform, and the text-books were well adapted to that plan of teaching. They contained the principles of the science stated in arbitrary rules. These rules were entirely abstract, containing nothing suggestive of the reasons upon which they were founded. The teaching, in like manner, was arbitrary, not pretending to inform the understanding. In early times books were very scarce. Many of our fathers, in describing their school days, would say there was only one arithmetic in a school, and that belonged to the teacher. The scholar who "ciphered," had his manuscript, slate, and pencil. The teacher wrote the rule upon the pupil's slate. The pupil copied it into his manuscript, and committed it to memory. The teacher copied a problem upon the pupil's slate, to the solution of which the pupil applied his rule. The solution being examined and pronounced correct by the teacher, was transcribed, together with the problem, into the manuscript, by the pupil, who then presented his slate for another problem; and so on, till the pupil was considered sufficiently expert in the application of this rule; and then he was advanced to the next. But afterwards, when each cipherer had his own book, or, at least, when there was one book to each family, the books were still of the same char-

acter, and the teaching differed only in the teacher dispensing with the copying of the rules and problems upon the pupil's slate. Under this system many scholars became somewhat expert in the rules, as far as the "rule of three," and some even "ciphered through." But very many had very ill success, as might be expected, though "ciphering" was their chief employment in school.

Colburn's First Lessons introduced the study of arithmetic to a much younger class of scholars. The simplicity, easy gradation, and perfect analysis in this work, accompanied by the thorough teaching which the book is admirably calculated to ensure, enabled scholars, though young, to acquire a knowledge of arithmetic truly surprising, when compared with any attainments by the old system. The Sequel, by the same author, partakes, in some measure, of the excellencies of the First Lessons, but is unfortunate in the separation of the development of principles from the exercises upon them. Teachers who had learned upon the old system, continued to teach upon that system; and scholars lost sight of the principles in the application of abstract rules. Even now, when improvement is so common in every department of education, and school books are multiplied without number, very few, in teaching written arithmetic, though lavish in their praises of mental arithmetic, pretend to insist upon "the application on the slate, of the completely embraced principles of mental arithmetic." In justification of this remark, observe the following extract from a late report of the School Committee of Boston, a place where we might expect to find the best theories upon education in successful practice.

"Mental arithmetic is a matter of pure intellect; and to be taught with perfect success, requires great force and intelligence. So taught, it includes every thing most essential and valuable in arithmetic. \* \* \* It ought not to be taken out of the master's hands, and it ought to be continued at all periods of the pupil's progress. Written arithmetic, on the other hand, except as the application on the slate of the completely embraced principles of mental, is a thing almost mechanical; and a very ordinary grade of intellect may be successful in teaching it. Practically, therefore, it has often been said, that it is not necessary to have persons of great ability, or of a high and thorough education, to teach writing and arithmetic. This conclusion, whether true or false, acted upon, must have a pernicious influence on the schools; as it is certain that, for the salary we offer, we may command the services of persons of high character, of real ability, and of the best education. Such persons, and such only, should be at the head of our schools. But should we continue to employ persons of this description to teach things which might be equally well taught by those who would feel themselves well paid by a salary of \$600 or \$800 a year? Instruction in writing and arithmetic is even now actually given,—and that too in the cases where it is most difficult, with beginners, in the fourth and third classes,—by females who receive only



\$300 a year. Let the work continue to be done by such persons, and let the more expensive labor be reserved for the branches which require superior ability."

Here I understand them to wish written arithmetic to be taught as "a thing almost mechanical," without the application on the slate of the completely embraced principles of mental arithmetic. "Why," say they, "should we continue to employ persons of high character, of real ability, and of the best education, to teach written arithmetic?" Let it be done by "persons of a very ordinary grade of intellect," by men "who would feel themselves well paid by a salary of \$600 or \$800 a year," by "females who receive only \$300 a year;" but let mental arithmetic be taught by men "of great force and intelligence. It ought not to be taken out of the master's hands."

Now, this theory, so far as pertains to written arithmetic, though coming from a quarter so respectable, seems to me better suited to former times than to the present; to times when, and places where, school privileges were extremely limited; and scholars had not early training in mental arithmetic; and particularly where the teachers were not "of a high and thorough education," but "of a very ordinary grade of intellect." It is a pleasure to think that such places are fast diminishing in our part of the country.

What is the great difference between mental and written arithmetic, that they should be kept so distinct as to be taught by different persons? Written arithmetic, as it seems to me, includes, or, at least, *should* include all of mental arithmetic, and differs from it only in recording more or less of the processes of the mental operations; and if either requires superior ability in the teaching, it is written arithmetic. What is taught in this manner, has a permanency in the learner's mind; it is a part of his knowledge, a part of himself; he can call it forth at any time. Even if he have forgotten the abstract formula, he has that within him that renders him independent of the formula. Not so with one who has learned on the other system; he is dependent upon his memory; and as that is ever treacherous, he must constantly recur to his book, or never be certain of his results; even in those cases where frequent use would seem to keep the memory fresh, he is not sure. But a short time since, a mechanic of some distinction, who has built more cylindrical cement cisterns than any other mason in this city, in calculating the contents of one he was building for me, multiplied the product of the square of radius and the depth, by 22 1-2, for the wine gallons. He should have used 23 1-2 instead of 22 1-2, a mistake of memory, which he had, within himself, no means of rectifying or detecting, and which would make a difference of

a dollar or more, in the price of an ordinary cistern. So in the more common rules of arithmetic, there is the same liability to errors, or failures of memory, where truths have been committed to it without the medium of the understanding.

At the present time, I see no necessity of divorcing the natural union of mental and written arithmetic, in our schools. Scholars enter upon the study of mental arithmetic at so early an age, and become so accustomed to reasoning upon the relations of numbers, that on taking up written arithmetic, they can more readily acquire the art in connection with the science than independently of it; and the pleasure of acquisition is incomparably superior. The knowledge acquired has a self-sustaining permanency amply compensating the labor of acquisition. The mental exercise disciplines the mind to acuteness of perception and reasoning, that will render the mind more efficient on all subjects of its investigation. Whereas the old-fashioned method advocated in the above extract, is "almost mechanical," mere drudgery, uninteresting to most minds, and to many positively repugnant, not to say stultifying. May we not attribute much of the dislike which so many college students have to mathematical studies, to the early disgust taken to arithmetic taught upon this method? True, there is something peculiar in mathematical reasoning, and there may be a constitutional difference of mental organization inclining some more than others to mathematical studies; still, I apprehend there might be less difference, both in tastes and attainments, if the early study and teaching of arithmetic were conducted upon the same rational mode as mental arithmetic, and the higher branches of mathematics. It is generally admitted that the elementary treatises upon the higher branches of mathematics should be adapted to the understanding of the youthful student. It is deemed necessary to the successful pursuit of those studies. Is it not equally necessary that elementary treatises upon written arithmetic should be adapted to the *more* youthful student? But, except Colburn's Sequel, and Russell's Rational Arithmetic, a recent publication, where is one that makes any just pretension to such adaptation? Much of the oral teaching, however, it is thought, has a better adaptation to the understanding than the teaching of text-books. The more enterprising and zealous teacher, of any considerable experience, will not be satisfied to direct the inquisitive student merely to the abstract formula; to give him stone instead of bread. Such teachers will welcome the recent publication above named, as they must have felt the need of a text-book that would coöperate with them in effecting and securing, in the minds of their pupils, the intimate union of this important art and science.

It is presumed the sentiments of the above extract from the Boston School Report, finds not a very general response, either among their very respectable body of teachers, or the more intelligent part of the community. It is doubted, indeed, if the gentleman who penned this part of the report, upon examining this point by itself, would insist upon it. He seems to be making out a case, contending against the two-headed organization of the Boston schools, and opposes one error by advancing another of a more serious character; for, while one increases the cost of education, the other, in a greater ratio, diminishes its value, and imposes upon the youthful mind a blind servitude to abstract rules, instead of the natural and healthful exercise and development of the reasoning faculties.

R.

### HOW MUCH DO WE KNOW?

In all science the first truth to be learned, is that we really know nothing at all. That is, we know nothing of the character of the original natural causes of things; this is totally inexplicable. "A little learning is a dangerous thing,"—that little learning which pretends to know every thing, and utters no voice of wonder at the mysteries of creation, and refers no phenomenon to the direct, yet mysterious agency of a divine hand. In this respect, the truly learned and the very ignorant are not very far apart; not half so far as is the man of little learning from either. Let us illustrate. The ignorant, man refers the phenomena of thunder and lightning to the direct agency of God, and learns to wonder and adore. The truly learned man, although he knows that electricity is the immediate cause of the terrific noise and the glittering light, yet beyond this, is as totally ignorant as the untaught native of the forest. He knows nothing of what this agent is, except its name—and what is a name? What called it into being? What gave it its terrific power? What hurls it, with the speed of thought, along the vaulted sky? The wise man cannot tell; and he too learns to wonder and adore. But the man of little learning exclaims, "That is not the voice of God; it is nothing but electricity; and I can make enough of that myself."

Is profound learning, then, of no avail, since the result is that the truly wise and the unlearned, come at last to the same conclusion,—that they are both entirely ignorant? Far from it. It is a glorious thing, like the angels, to *desire* to look into the great mysteries of creation, though they are still mysteries;—

like Paul to stand in the third heavens, and to see and hear things unutterable, though they are still unutterable ;—like Moses to ascend to the top of the mountain, and witness but the tokens of God's awful presence, though we may not see His face ;—to mount, step by step, until we may gaze over the outer walls of the tabernacle, and catch a glimpse of the mysteries of the holy of holies, though they are still mysteries, and it is still holy, holy, holy.

The true objects of science are to classify facts, to assign to each effect its proper immediate cause, without even presuming to lift the veil to explain from whence these causes are. This is a work, not for philosophy, but for faith. They originate, not in nature, but in God. The philosopher who should ascertain that the phenomena of electricity, magnetism, and lightning, are one and the same, in regard to their immediate origin, comes no nearer to the explanation of the ultimate causes of those phenomena, than the savage who supposes that the thunder is really the voice of God. What, for instance, is attraction? Sir Isaac Newton's great discovery was little more than a suggestion, that the same power which brought the apple to the earth, also kept the planets in their orbits ; but Newton never presumed to tell what that power is. It is, indeed, called *ATTRACTION*, a word of Latin origin, which signifies a "*drawing to*," and that is all. Some brains are filled with these long Latin names, the length of which is often an abundant apology and substitute for a reason. But let us reason. The earth draws the apple to the ground. What is the cause, what is that power which the earth possesses? Attraction. What is attraction? It is a tendency of matter towards matter. But what is this tendency? Attraction. Thus we may move in a perpetual circle in tracing the causes of any phenomenon. The naked truth is, the apple falls because it does fall. This is all we know. The why and the wherefore are found in the will and power of Him, by whom all things consist, in whom we live and move and have our being.

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### VALUE OF A GOOD SCHOLAR.

While it is the duty of the teacher to guard, with jealous care, against every temptation to exhibit tokens of partial favor to the scholar who is endowed by nature with eminent talents, still that teacher is blind to the true interests of his whole school, who fails to prize and cherish such talents, and to encourage their possessor by every just and judicious means to press on-



ward to higher attainments. Who has not observed, that the substitution of even one, two, or three intellectual *young men*, for as many rude and unscholar-like *boys* of the same age, has often changed the whole atmosphere of the schoolroom?

The following remarks of Prof. Haddock upon this subject, deserve the attention of the teacher :

One of the accidental influences which modify the effects of systematic education, is example.

We have in mind not the general power of example, in which each is affected by all, and all by each, and a common public sentiment generated, a social character formed ; though no man liveth to himself, and thought and feeling every where tend to diffusion, to an equilibrium. The influence we allude to is rather that which characterizes here and there an individual, in every community, gifted somewhat above his fellows, and capable of fusing and remoulding the minds about him. They are ruling spirits in their day and generation ; and whether elevated to attract the admiration of a whole people, or confined to a village popularity, seem "born to command," and exercise, it may be unconsciously, a formative energy. They lead by general consent, by an acknowledged, native right. Their power is in their temperament, in their will, in their earnestness, mainly. They are impersonations of moral energy. If this character be combined with a proportioned and beautiful intellectual and moral development, we then see humanity in its utmost perfection. The spectacle of such a man silently elevates and rectifies his age, his town, or his village. In a class of students, academical or professional, it raises the standard of ambition, sheds lustre on the pursuits of learning, and insensibly diffuses a liberal and generous love of letters through the whole circle. No teacher can have failed to see how sensibly the example of one true scholar is felt, and how magnanimously it is admired among his equals and competitors.

In active life the same delightful power is illustrated. A noble heart never beats alone. A renovating spirit never breathes in vain. With living excellence we have inextinguishable sympathies. It consecrates the place of its abode, and leaves memorials of itself sculptured on the imperishable materials of which souls are made. A good man, with a great and resolute heart, cannot live unfelt, nor die to be forgotten. And an earnest bad man is the most flagrant scourge of heaven. The intellect perverted by him, the hearts he sours or sears, the hopes he blasts, the happiness he poisons—who thinks of it all without wondering, with David, at the "prosperity of the wicked?"

For good or for evil, we are affected more than we are aware,

by the models of personal energy, with which, in the course of life, it is the lot of us all, more or less, to come in contact. Not one escapes altogether the contagion of example, more potent than all precept, more plastic than our acts of education. A master mind, oracular even when not original, in which ordinary thoughts kindle and burn, and by which familiar objects are electrified, is responsible to society, and to God, for a fearful power.

It should be an object never lost sight of, to secure in seminaries of learning, and indeed every where, examples of the most perfect mental development. Systems which tend to equalize the benefits of education by reducing the standard of practical attainment—lessening, in this way, the difference between the highest and the lowest—have the effect, ultimately, to depress all; for they remove one of the best incitements to excellence, the actual exemplification of it in a living instance before us and of us. If a man of pre-eminent character and attainment should do nothing else but exist in the eyes of his associates and neighbors, he would live for a most enviable usefulness. And a system which raises up one such man, in a class of students or a community, really improves and elevates the whole.

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### INFLUENCE OF HOME UPON THE SCHOOL.

Much has been said, and said justly, of the influence exerted by the common school teacher upon the manners and morals of the community in which he moves. It is not in danger of being too often impressed upon the attention. It should be frequently dwelt upon by the teacher himself. It would, doubtless, lead him to "magnify his office," and enlarge his hopes.

But another view must arise. The teacher acts against strong obstacles. His motives are often misrepresented, and his measures ridiculed. No one, therefore, has long taught without placing a proper incredulity in the path of baseless hopes. He meets much to discourage him in the character of children. Their love is mingled with selfishness, their sprightliness with trifling, their confidence with importunity. But one great point, whence contracting influences spring, is the home. On this we propose to consume a few moments of our readers' patience.

A teacher of large experience and comprehensive philanthropy, takes a school in a district of average advantages and expectations. Knowing what he has to do in the school, he forms his plans for improving his precious charge in habits of

order, punctuality, honesty, honor, and truth, while the main object of a common school is never lost sight of. Does he meet with the hearty coöperation of parents, even, generally? I mean not indefinite commendation, but definite acts. Take the matter of punctuality at school, for example. Do parents enforce this important duty at home? Or is the trifling errand, or valueless entertainment, or pernicious amusement preferred before it? Are not excuses offered for neglect in this, which a child would be ashamed to offer for failing to meet his companions at the play-ground? How many parents, too, paralyze the arm of the teacher, both by injudicious words and deeds, in the important matter of order. How many children, at home disobedient from custom, are to be *compelled* into habits of good order, which should have been already formed. Then, how inclined many are to fault the teacher, and justify the wrong doer. How little interest, further, is shown in the progress of their offspring, and the plans for their good. All these things weigh heavily upon the efforts of the faithful and determined man. They are sad obstacles in the way of his usefulness. Added to the natural indolence of children, they almost crush his strongest hopes. Exhausted with continued exertion, and often to little accomplishment, he is sometimes tempted to doubt the improveability of human nature, or the ultimate ascendancy of good.

Such are some, but not all the influences of home. Every community has its households of well trained and industrious youth, who in school are exemplars, and whose parents sustain him by their well directed support. There lie his earthly sympathies, and in these abodes he takes the cup of social communion. Does he suggest an improvement in the mode or the subjects of study? They give him hearty aid. Are his motives belied? They shame the slanderer. Do his circumstances call for advice? The best is freely given. Thus is he made to feel that the world is not unmingled evil, and courageously to enter its contests.

If, then, the influence of home can embitter the anxieties or heighten the joys of the common school instructor, let him not fail to improve its advantages, or strive to remedy its deficiencies. By a proper training of his pupils, both in word and example, let his influence reach the fireside of degraded homes. By forbearance, let him disarm active hostility. By an interest in the meanest child of his charge, let him show his impartial desire to overlook none. By an affable deportment, let him win the approach to all. Thus will the path of teaching be trodden with more pleasure, and improvement will chase away the gloom of discouragement.

'Tis with our judgment as our watches ; none  
Go just alike, but each believes his own. — *Pope.*

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We have strict statutes and most biting laws,  
Which for these fourteen years we have let sleep,  
Even like an overgrown lion in his cave,  
That goes not out to prey ; now, as fond fathers,  
Having bound up the threatening twigs of birch,  
Only to stick it in their children's sight,  
For terror, not to use ; in time the rod  
Becomes more mocked than feared ; so our decrees,  
Dead to infliction, to themselves are dead,  
And liberty plucks justice by the nose. — *Shakspeare.*

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Whatever may be said of the personal example of the celebrated Sterne, the following mode of treating critics and slanderers, which he has left us, is certainly worthy of imitation.

"God bless you, only next month if any one of you should gnash his teeth and storm and rage at me, as some of you did last May (in which, I remember, the weather was very hot), don't be exasperated if I pass it by again in good temper, being determined as long as I live or write, (which, in my case, means the same thing), never to give the honest gentlemen [the critics] a worse wish than my uncle Toby gave the fly that buzzed about his nose all dinner time. — "Go, Go, poor devil," quoth he, — "get thee gone ; why should I hurt thee ? This world is surely wide enough to hold both thee and me."

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The next Annual Meeting of the American Institute of Instruction will be held at Bangor, to commence on Tuesday, the 15th of August, and continue three days. Tickets through, from Boston, by Portland, and back, may be obtained at half price.

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